



2007 Annual Report

Rochester Fire Department
201 4th Street SE
Rochester, MN 55904-3726
507.328.2800

www.rochestermn.gov/departments/fire



March 2008

To the City Council and Citizens of Rochester:

I am pleased to present the 2007 Rochester Fire Department Annual Report. This report has taken on a new look from previous years. I trust that you will like the shortened version.

Fire Chief David Kapler retired late in the year to take a position as Fire Chief in Alameda California. Chief Kapler made Rochester his home for about 14 years. His leadership will be missed. We began the process of Chief selection prior to the departure of Chief Kapler and should have a new Chief on board by the printing of this document.

In an effort to maintain the function of the department I was selected by the City Administrator to fulfill the Fire Chief duties. Chief Lovett was brought off shift to fill my role and Captain Keefe moved into an acting position as Battalion Chief. This process has worked very well and I believe that the Department has made progress during this time.

In 2007 we broke ground for Station #5. The process of building a station takes about one year. Again, by the time you read this we will be operating out of the new station. This is the first additional station added to the RFD properties since Station #4 was built back in 1968.

I would be remiss if I did not point out that one of our fire fighters, Joe Farrell, was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer during 2007. Joe fought his battle with cancer courageously and in the end left us with a sad heart but a smile on our face. I have never seen an outpouring like that during Joe's last days and those days after he passed. Members of the department should be proud of themselves for the extraordinary care they gave to Joe and his family. Joe, go in peace, knowing that you have had a lasting effect on the department and those within.

The year 2008 should be an interesting year with the hiring of a new Fire Chief and opening Station #5. Thank you to all of you who have worked so hard to make this happen.

Any one with questions pertaining to the department should not hesitate to call 328 2800.

Respectfully,

Dan Slavin
Interim Fire Chief

RFD By The Numbers

City Information

Land Area	129.3
City	53.06
Rural	76.24
Population	110,838
City	98,649
Rural	12,189

Budget

	\$11,284,676
Per Capita	\$101.81

Staffing

Sworn Personnel	104
Civilian Personnel	4
Firefighters per 1000 Pop.	1.05

Vehicles

5 Engines	Sta. 1- 5
1 Spare Engine	Sta. 1
2 Aerial Trucks	Sta. 1 & 4
2 Tankers	Sta. 2
Light Rescue	Sta. 1 & 4
2 Grass Truck	Sta. 1 &
1 Hazmat Vehicle	Sta. 4
1 Collapse Rescue	Sta. 1
1 PS Command	Sta. 3
1 Boat	Sta. 1
2 Utility Vehicles	Sta. 1 & 4
1 Engine	Spare
1 Chief's Car	Sta. 1
8 FPB/Staff Cars	Admin.

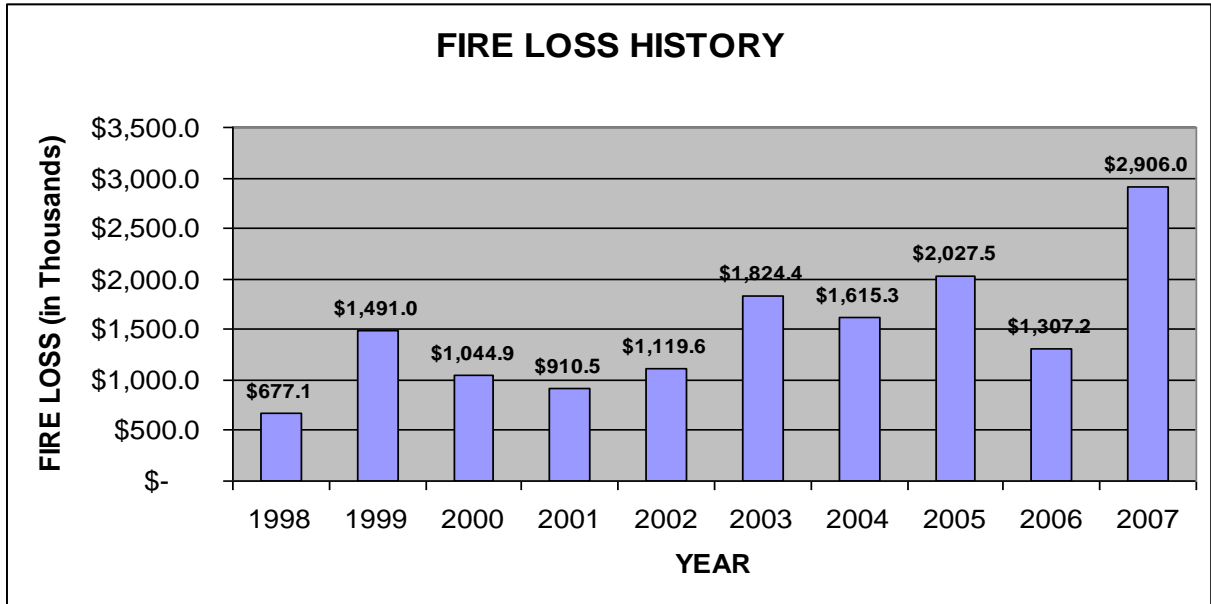
Fire Operations

Total Calls for Service (+13%)	7542
EMS Calls (+8%)	4449
Fire Calls (+6%)	283
Rescue Calls (+36%)	181
Hazmat Calls (+25%)	237
Public Assist Calls (+14%)	1617
False Alarm Calls (+36%)	775

Facilities & Equipment

Fire Stations	5
#1 - 521 South Broadway	
#2 - 702 W Silver Lake Drive NE	
#3 - 2755 2 nd Street SW	
#4 - 1875 41 st Street NW	
#5 - 305 28 th Street SE (open 2008)	

Admin/Fire Prevention Bureau
201 4th Street SE, Room 10

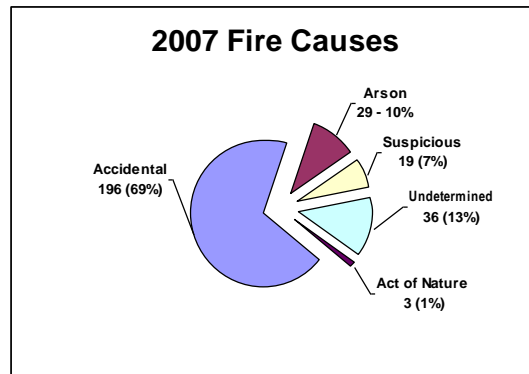
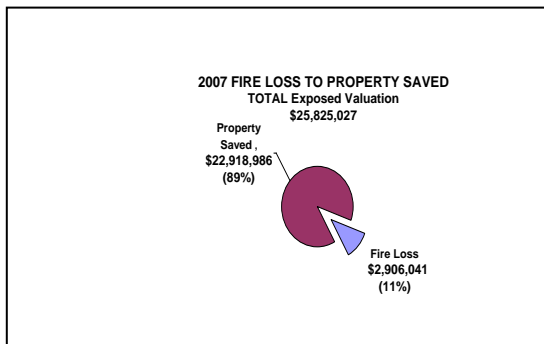


2007 Fire Experience

In 2007, the City of Rochester experienced a significant increase in property fire losses due to a large loss in December of an unsprinklered commercial building, totaling in excess of \$700,000 for the single fire.

Of the \$25,825,027 total valuation of properties at risk to fire during 2007, only \$2,906,041 was lost which amounts to a **Save Ratio of 12:1**.

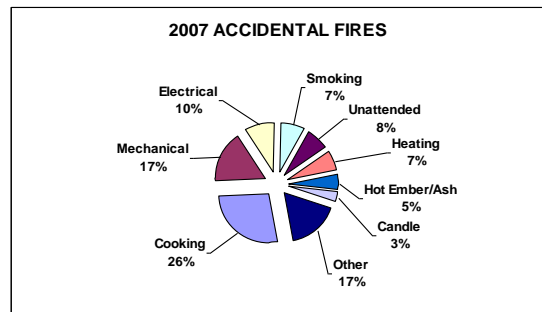
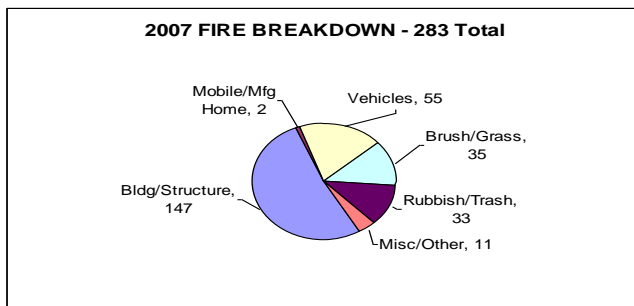
Over the past ten years the city's average fire loss has been \$1,492,670 which amounts to \$15.13 per capita and \$5256 average loss per fire.



Where Did Fires Occur and What Caused Them?

Of the 284 fires in 2007, 51% of fire incidents occurred in buildings, 36% were in residential homes and 19% occurred in vehicles.

Cooking fires (52) were the number one cause of fires, followed closely by mechanical failures (34), arson (29), electrical (19) and smoking materials (14).



2007 In Review

Station #5



On June 4th, Rochester Fire broke ground for Fire Station 5 at 305 28th St. SE, just NE of the Shopko South Store. The architect is Yaggy-Colby and the general contractor is Benike Construction. Project manager is Administrative Services Manager, Curt Pronk. The new station is expected to go into service in March of 2008. Engine 51 is a custom built American-LaFrance Eagle model pumper, and was received and placed into service at the opening of the station.



Farewell Chief Kapler

Chief Dave Kapler bid RFD farewell with his retirement on September 30, 2007. After 14 years at the helm of the Rochester Fire Department, Dave retired to move to sunny California, as the Fire Chief of Alameda, CA.

During his tenure with RFD, Dave worked to bring many progressive changes to the department with new response capacities; EMS, hazmat, collapse rescue, rebuilt fire stations and added Station 5. When Dave arrived in 1993, our call volume was 1142, basically fire/rescue calls. In 2007 RFD calls for service reached an all time high of 7542, of which 4449 were EMS calls. Thanks Dave for your service and dedication while serving as our Fire Chief.



Welcome Firefighters

On September 13, 2007 RFD swore in five new fire fighters. Following the ceremony, firefighter recruits John Busch, Brett Knapp, Tom Lovett, Dylan Mills and Jeremy Zabel went under the tutelage of Training Captain Chuck Solseth for the duration of their recruit training. These recruits completed the RFD compliment that includes the 12 additional staff needed to open Fire Station 5 in 2008.

Welcome Home Eric



Captain Eric Kerska returned home in August from a 2 1/2 year deployment with the MN National Guard Red Bull unit. This was part of the longest deployment of National Guard units in the Guard's history. We are grateful to Eric's return as well as that of all the sons, daughters, spouses and family members that have serviced their country and their community in this way. The City of Rochester was recognized by the MN National Guard for the tremendous support provided Eric's family and others while they were deployed.



Rest In Peace



Joseph M. Farrell 12/8/66 - 2/22/08

Firefighter Joe "Smoo" Farrell answered his final call with the Rochester Fire Department atop Engine 41 on Friday February 29, 2007 on his way to his final rest after losing his courageous battle with cancer. Nothing can be printed here that will ever describe Joe's life and what he meant to his brother and sister firefighters, family and friends. We miss you Joe.

55th Civil Support Joint Training

In September RFD crews participated in a joint Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) training exercise with the National Guard 55th Civil Support Division as well as Rochester Police, and Gold Cross Ambulance.

The Civil Support Teams are designed to deploy rapidly to assist local emergency agencies at domestic with WMD incidents to help identify agents or substances, determine the nature and extent of the danger and potential consequences, as well as provide expert technical advice and support the arrival of other state and federal military response assets. They assist fire responders in detection, assessment process and, as the first military presence on scene, they serve

as an advance party to liaison with the Joint Task Force Civil Support unit.

The drills were conducted over 3 days, with all three shifts participating. The nature of the drill was different each day to insure each shift had a valid experience. All three drills contained an element of WMD with the last day's drill combining several critical problems for the two teams to contend with. Scenarios included radio active devices planted to disable the command post, an active WMD lab in a vacant building which resulted in first-in crews needing to be rescued, decontaminated and transferred to a medical facility. The modeled vapor plume indicated the incident, if real, would have necessitated the evacuation of nearly one third of the city.

Afterward, a critique of the drill was held including live video provided by the 55th Civil Support Team. This was one of the most comprehensive drills of this nature ever conducted by Rochester Fire.

On-line Language Lessons

During 2007 RFD personnel participated in a pilot program with Rosetta Stone On-line Language Learning Lessons. Thirty four firefighters along with 70 police officers were registered with the Rosetta Stone On-line Language Learning program. Most enrolled in Spanish, in an attempt to learn a second language commonly found to be spoken in Rochester. Thank you to all the firefighters and police officers who participated.

becomeafirefighter.org

This RFD firefighter recruitment website went on-line in March of 2007. This website is the hub of the department's effort to expand interest in firefighting as a career to attract more women and minorities to consider firefighting as a career.

In addition to the website, RFD staff visited colleges, technical schools in the region to recruit young people to prepare for the firefighter test in Rochester. Billboards, poster ads, and rack cards have been posted in area

businesses, area high schools and over 100 National Guard Armories in the state of MN.



101th AED Cardiac Save

Rochester Fire and Police achieved a landmark in the use of the Automatic Electronic Defibrillation (AED) units carried in fire and police vehicles. Since 1990 there have been 101 documented lives saved in the City of Rochester, when early defibrillation was used by first responders, for patients in ventricular fibrillation (VF).

AED units were first introduced into use by the Police Department, as part of a medical study by Medical Director, Dr. Roger White of the Mayo Clinic. The Fire Department was included in 1998 when firefighters began responding to emergency medical calls as EMT first responders.

The current survival rate in the City of Rochester for a witnessed cardiac arrest, when early defibrillation is used, is one of the highest in the nation at 52% with a national average of 7%.

Currently, the average "shock-to-call" time in the City of Rochester is 5.5 minutes. Rochester Fire responded to 290 incidents involving cardiac arrest, cardiac dysrhythmia and patients with chest pain, in 2007.

Staffing Updates

Promotions

Battalion Chief	Steve Belau
Captain	Jeff Berning
Captain	David Worstman

New Hires

John Busch	Dylan Mills
Jeremy Zabel	Tom Lovett
Brett Knapp	

Retirees

Russ Clark	5/29/07
Joe Book	6/28/07
Dave Kapler	9/27/07

2007 Incident Report

2007 Fire Response Map